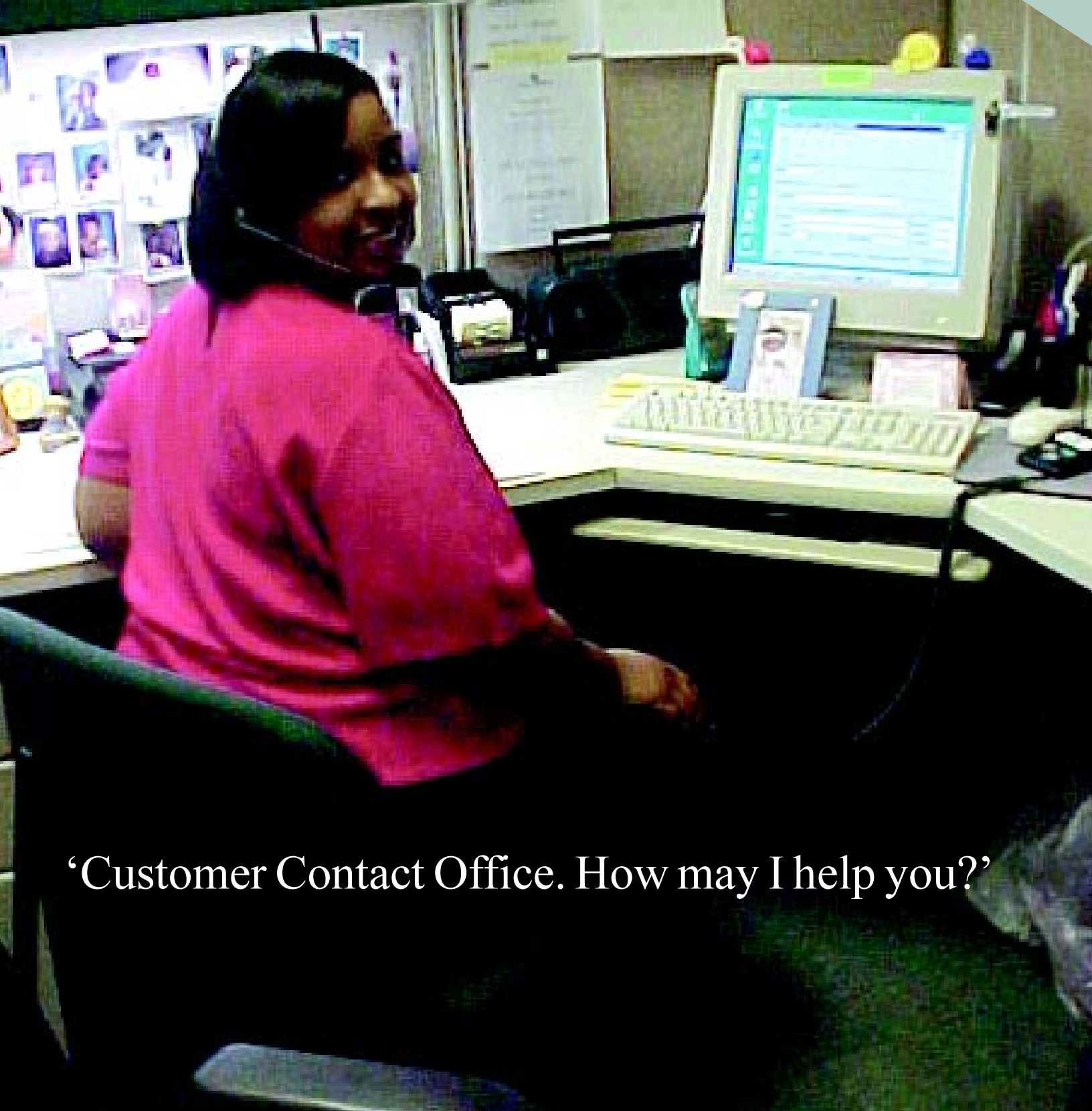


Hub magazine

U.S. ARMY RESERVE PERSONNEL COMMAND
JANUARY 2000

THE GATEWAY
A special pullout section of the Hub



‘Customer Contact Office. How may I help you?’

Hub

Vol. 30, No. 3

COMMANDER

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On the front cover: Arvella Graham assists a customer in the Customer Contact Office's Call Center. Photo by Andrea Wales.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

January 2000

Reports

- 8 **CCO: Out on the front line**
by Andrea Wales
- 11 **Gateway insert with Today's Mil Tech**
A pullout section to serve the full-time support community
- 19 **Officer zone expansion**
by Maj. Joseph Whitlock
- 20 **'Don't ask, don't tell' and other EO issues**
EO/EEO-related stories are on three subsequent pages.
- 23 **Survivor Benefit Plan**
'Forgotten widows' law and open season are highlighted.
- 23 **CAR at AR-PERSCOM**
by Andrea Wales
- 24 **Sweeping TSP changes**
Open season ending Jan. 31 is last of its kind.
- 24 **Carlson cuts leisure services to statesiders**
Army contract travel agent says it can't afford it.
- 24 **Civilian tuition assistance**
by Rose Spears
- 26 **Be of good cheer**
AR-PERSCOM visits veterans facilities during the holidays.

Departments

- 3 **Commander's Call**
by Col. Timothy W. Cannon
- 4 **From the Command Sergeant Major**
by Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Rosner
- 5 **Sergeants Business**
by Sgt. Maj. Ruth Labhart
- 6 **HHC Commander's Corner**
by Capt. John Manning
- 27 **News Notes**
compiled by Andrea Wales

COMMANDER'S CALL

COL. TIMOTHY W. CANNON



Managing customer relationships: Customer service for the new millennium

"Take a number." "Get in line." "First come, first served." "Please hold for the next available agent." Customer service the way most of us view it, but an outdated view which no longer serves our customers or the Army Reserve well.

Customer service has now become a complicated, highly technical business.

"Customer service" is changing dramatically at breakneck speed. Lucrative businesses know attracting and retaining customers requires more than just answering the telephone when it rings. Customer (soldier) attraction and retention is as important to the Army Reserve as any private company: It is our bread and butter, our bottom line.

Serving our myriad customers with their spectrum of needs requires sophisticated systems, refined business processes, knowledgeable and trained customer-service representatives and integrated information technology as a backbone.

Customer Relationship Management, or CRM, is customer service with a significant twist:

- establishing long-term relationships with our customers;
- knowing what customers need and providing it accurately and in time; and
- identifying how customers differ and their relative criticality to mission accomplishment. Customer history and information needs to be available "@the speed of electrons!"

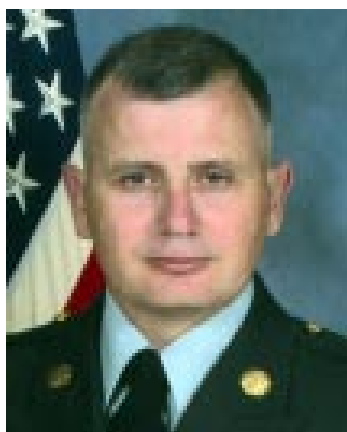
Our contact numbers prove that serving our extensive customer base of over 1 million Reserve soldiers plus veterans and families is a daunting task. Thousands of phone calls, pieces of mail, e-mail messages, faxes and walk-in customers prompt our assistance daily. Adequately manning the phones and processing cases is no longer possible with current resources. One crucial step is identifying ways to enable customers to help themselves obtain information via the telephone or web site. Information technology becomes the force multiplier.

AR-PERSCOM's Customer Contact Office, or CCO, has taken the lead in helping the command analyze CRM requirements, in part through special subcommittees for telephones, the Internet and the Soldier Management System, or SMS. Some of you have been involved in these efforts. This month's *Hub* focus on CCO's mission will help explain these initiatives and plans.

We have already made tremendous strides in understanding and documenting our business processes and the multiple channels of customer entry for service.

What remains on our plates this coming year is a focus on finding the right information-technology tools and an integrated solution to draw all of this together. Providing the right services, at the right time, to the right customers is key to attracting soldiers and retaining them through the entire personnel life cycle of their Army Reserve careers.

Lucrative businesses know attracting and retaining customers requires more than just answering the telephone when it rings.



Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Rosner

From the Command Sergeant Major

Great leadership of the past continues to influence the future

Leadership can be defined in numerous ways, but probably the simplest definition and one of the best definitions of leadership was given by Harry Truman: "A leader is someone who has the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do, and like it." There have been many other terminologies and concepts used to describe leadership, but this phrase basically says it all.

Today's Army values: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage are necessary traits that are required, not just from our leaders but from each other. A leader — in order to be successful by any definition — needs to have the necessary skills to create an environment in which subordinates have confidence in their abilities, mutual respect for each other and for the leader, and will respond immediately — as a team — when the leader specifies a mission.

Every soldier in Today's Army is a leader regardless of rank or position. The attitude, opinions, desires and deportment of these soldiers mold the approach to missions taken by superiors and subordinates. It is the summation of this leadership by every soldier that makes our Army great.

Non-commissioned officers must be

tough and demanding, yet always fair. It is the NCO who leads soldiers in the day-to-day activities, ensuring that the soldiers understand the instructions or task that must be accomplished. This begins by giving clear, concise instructions and by setting the example.

The NCO must be a willing teacher and be an aggressive role model.

One thing that all leaders must remember is that leaders will never be more or less than their soldiers' evaluation of them. This is the true efficiency report. From most of your soldiers, you can expect courage, guts, endurance, motivation, esprit de corps and a desire for achievement to match yours. You can expect a love of God, country and of duty, and they won't mind the heat or the cold if you are there to sweat and shiver with them.

One of the major points that many leaders fail to understand is that you do not accept the troops: They were there first! They accept you! And when they do you will know it. There won't be any big parade or celebration, but you will know.

Your orders can appoint you to a position of authority, but no orders or insignia of rank can appoint you as a leader. Leadership is an intangible thing. Leadership is

developed within yourself, and you will get stronger as you go.

Gen. George Patton once said, "Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity."

This is a statement that many of today's leaders need to read and practice. We train our soldiers how to do their jobs but often fail to let them do it: We want them to do it our way only. If we want to grow well-trained leaders in the future, we must understand that there is more than one way to get where we are going or to do what needs to be done. If you have trained your soldiers well, they will accomplish the mission. If you believe in them, they will believe in you.

Let me finish with a quote from Gen. Omar Bradley, "The test of a leader lies in the reaction and response of his followers. He should not have to impose authority. Bossiness in itself never made a leader. He must make his influence felt by example and the instilling of confidence in his followers. The greatness of a leader is measured by the achievements of the led. This is the ultimate test of his effectiveness."

Wishing all of you the best in the New Year.

Sergeants Business



Sgt. Maj. Ruth Labhart

NCO corps: The last 100 years of backbone

I imagine if anyone sat back in the year 1900 and tried to visualize what the military would be like in the year 2000: Their wildest imaginations would never have foreseen where the military has gone in 100 years. There probably was not the slightest inkling that the military would become a full-time job for many individuals, that women would play an active part of the military, all the regulations, pay and allowances, training, aircraft carriers, armored vehicles, going from ground fighting techniques to a more technical “cyberspace” method of war, and the multitude of other changes and techniques.

A brief history of the first non-commissioned officers can be traced back to 1609 when entire towns had their own squads, led by NCOs, to counter Indian hit-and-run tactics and to operate around the settlements in Jamestown, Va. The Continental Congress formed a national force from the 13 colonies in June 1775 with civilians as soldiers.

Throughout history NCOs have earned the reputation as the “Backbone of the Army” by accomplishing missions they performed as small unit leaders, technical experts, trainers and, perhaps most importantly, guardians of the Army’s standards, according to *The Story of the Non-Commissioned Officer Corps: The Backbone of the Army*, edited by Arnold G. Fisch Jr. and Robert K. Wright Jr.

During the latter years of the 19th century, the United States began to emerge as a New World power. World War I provided many opportunities for NCOs to prove their skills both as technicians and as leaders on the modern battlefield. Many NCOs performed as junior officers when taking over when these officers had fallen in battle. Gen. John J. Pershing saw this and recommended NCO training in leadership skills which was implemented

and resulted in strong performance by the NCOs during the last months of WWI.

World War II made more demands upon the non-commissioned officer corps and had a greater impact upon the NCO’s role and status than any previous conflict in American history. Thousands of new technical specialists were added to handle the more sophisticated weaponry of WWII. The Army introduced the military occupational specialty, or MOS, system to identify the specific skills NCOs needed to handle these new complex systems.

Another change of the NCO during WWII was the fact that more and more soldiers were married men, who lived in their own homes rather than sharing the barracks with their subordinates.

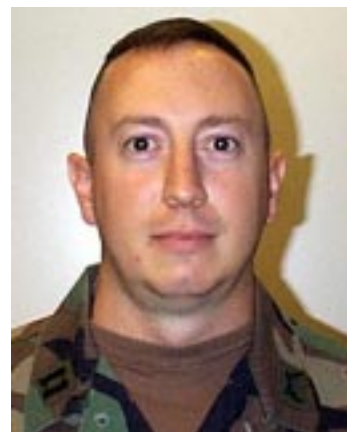
After WWII, the Army seemed to slip back and training for NCOs was at an all-time low. When war broke out in Korea there was evidence of poor combat leadership and discipline. The Army brought in rigorous training, and NCOs demonstrated a renewed spirit and their leadership skills re-emerged. They became recognized as leaders in battle even more than in WWII.

After the war ended in 1953, there was some slippage; however, the draft, which was started in the 1940s continued until the president and Congress decided to end the draft (Selective Service) in 1973. The Army then became the Modern Volunteer Army that was designed to build an Army upon the most modern principles of personnel management, leadership, motivation and training by recognizing, encouraging and rewarding NCO professionalism.

In the late 1950s, the Army revised and expanded its system of enlisted rank and grade distinctions to differentiate between the

continued on page 7

From the HHC commander



Capt. John Manning

Sponsorship means meeting the needs of a new AR-PERSCOM soldier and family

"Sir, I was glad to receive your letter welcoming me to your unit, it came as a surprise to get it, though. What I mean by this is, in the past I never even received so much as a welcome packet from my gaining units. I have received your letter and a welcome packet. ... This lets me know that the command cares for its soldiers. Can't wait to get on board. ..."

I received this e-mail in October from a Regular Army soldier who reports to AR-PERSCOM in early 2000. I am confident that the soldier who sent this note comes here with a very positive impression/perception of AR-PERSCOM.

Now we need to make sure the "face-to-face" first impression for this soldier "wows" him even more than the letters, calls and welcome packet.

Our most important assets in AR-PERSCOM are the soldiers and civilians who work here. AR-PERSCOM soldiers and civilians are also our most important customers. Whether we ignore an external or internal customer, we hurt the organization as a whole. Doing our duty to take care of new internal customers is vital. By ensuring we meet the needs of our inbound personnel, we ensure they arrive ready, willing and able to conduct the command mission of providing soldiers in support of the national military strategy.

As a sponsor, each of us helps new people with some of their basic and initial requirements upon moving to a new location.

Similar to Maslow's "heirarchy of needs," people must first be comfortable in the areas of physiology and safety for themselves and their families before they can concentrate on being productive workers.

As retired Gen. William W. Crouch, once the commander in chief of U.S. Army, Europe, said, "By helping soldiers meet their personal needs, sponsors help guarantee that soldiers are able to devote themselves to their duties."

What is a good sponsor? The Total Army Sponsorship Program/AR 600-8-8 directs the sponsorship function to:

- assist soldiers, civilian employees and families during the reassignment process;
- assist families geographically separated from the soldier or civilian employee sponsor because of duty requirements;
- improve unit or organizational cohesion and readiness by decreasing distractions that hamper personal performance and mission accomplishment; and
- support the Army's personnel life-cycle function of sustainment.

Sponsorship means more than passing on information. A well-managed and systematic sponsorship program can prevent problems before they cause hardships to newly arriving personnel. A sponsor provides support to the new person before arrival and upon arrival to AR-PERSCOM.

Prior to arrival, the sponsorship includes:

VIEWPOINT

“You never get a second chance to make a good first impression.”

an addage often quoted by AR-PERSCOM commander
Col. Timothy Cannon

- confirming transportation and lodging arrangements;
- informing relocating personnel about living costs;
- discussing financial assistance options;
- sending a command welcome packet; and
- keeping in touch with the inbound person and family.

Upon arrival, the sponsor should

- provide a personal welcome;
- facilitate the newcomer's transfer to their first night's lodging;
- introduce the newcomer to fellow soldiers and civilians; and
- introduce the newcomer to the chain of command and supervision.

These are some of the required sponsorship activities. To “wow” a customer, we need to do more than just the requirements. Anyone can send a letter and HHC-standardized welcome packet, but what makes a great sponsorship program are individual sponsors who go above and beyond the basics and really work to inform and help the new personnel and their families.

“Show me a company with an effective sponsorship program, and I'll show you a unit that's probably good at everything it does,” according to Maj. Gen. John G. Meyer Jr. in his book, from *Company Command, The Bottom Line*.

**To ‘wow’ a customer,
we need to do more than
just the requirements ...
go above and beyond the basics.**

SERGEANTS BUSINESS NCO CORPS

continued from page 5

large number of individuals who carried responsibility, because of their mastery of specific tasks, and those who filled positions that required them to exercise leadership on a constant basis. The new “specialist ranks” emerged; however, the “hard stripe” continued.

NCOs were called upon to fill the traditional roles of skilled trainer and small unit leaders during the Vietnam War, Desert Shield/Storm and during several other conflicts. NCOs proved their worth as they had in earlier similar assignments in the Philippines, Korea and elsewhere. This time, they helped the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, or ARVN, develop abilities ranging from how to operate bulldozers and other heavy equipment to how to use helicopters and sophisticated weapons supplied by the United States.

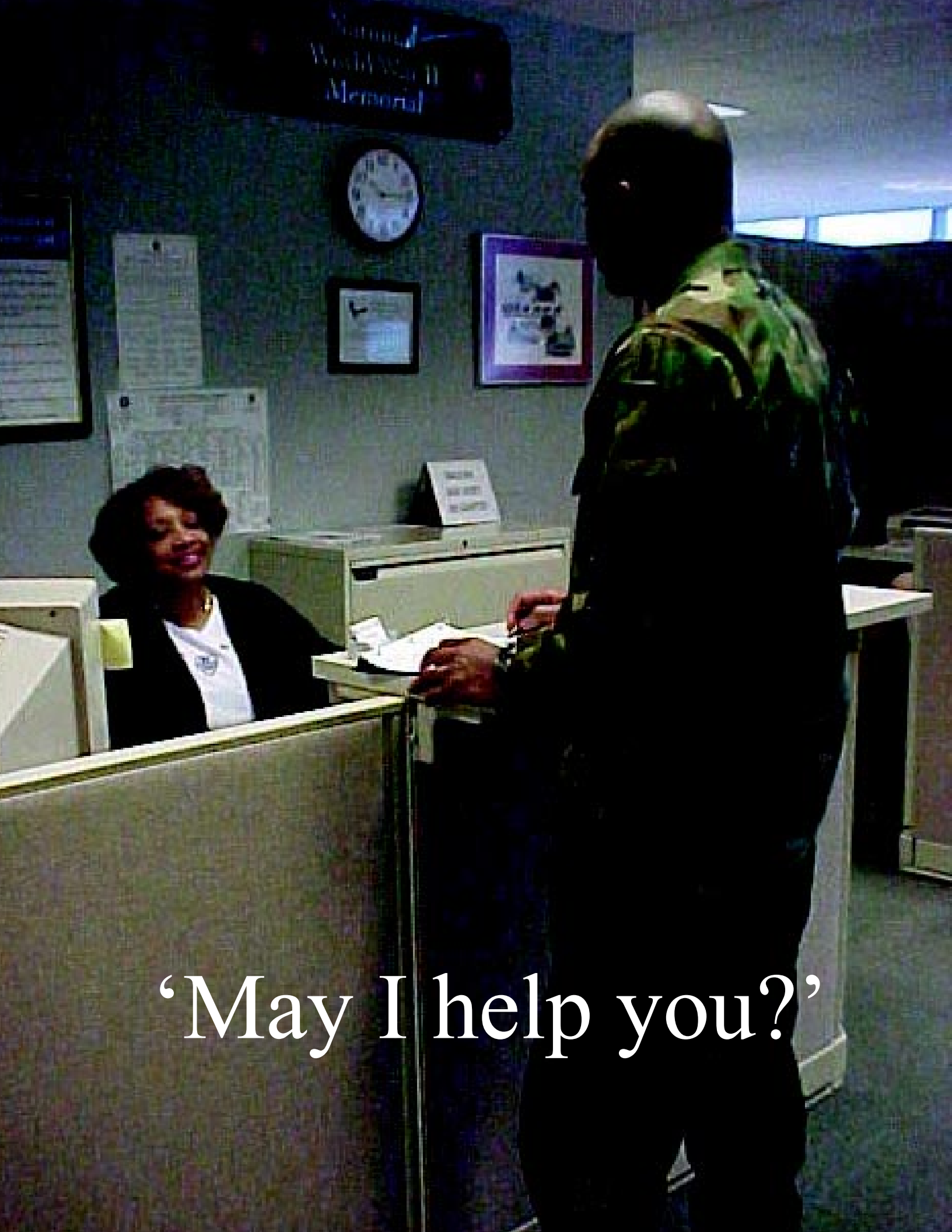
Other NCO developments during the past 100 years include implementation of the NCO Academy. The first academy was developed beginning in 1947, then in 1967 the Non-commissioned Officers Candidate Course, or NCOCC, was developed to train NCOs for combat arms. This was followed by the Armored School and the Artillery School.

In 1971, the Non-commissioned Officers Education System, or NCOES, was implemented for E4s and E5s. The objective being to increase the professional quality of the NCO corps; to provide enlisted personnel with opportunities for progressive, continuing professional development; to enhance career attractiveness; and to provide the Army with trained and dedicated NCOs to fill permanent positions of increased responsibility. In 1972 advanced courses were developed for E6 through E9s. In 1973 the Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, was established.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the average pay for a sergeant was \$25 per month compared to approximately \$1,700 base pay per month today; and, at the beginning of the century, they did not receive all of the benefits we receive today.

This is only a brief review of the emergence and recognition of the NCO over the last century; however, it is evident that the NCO's role and status has gradually increased. The changes we've seen during the last 100 years will never match the changes that will take place during the next 100 years. These changes – past, present and future – occur as a result of changes in society, changes to modern technologies and the resulting improved intelligence data as well as to the associated need for new concepts of operations and new kinds of organizations. Today, we are recognized as professionals, and we must continue to progress in this ever-changing world.

Sgt. Maj. Ruth Labhart is the directorate sergeant major for the Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate.



‘May I help you?’

Customer Contact Office: Out on the front line

by Andrea Wales

Three things are crucial to helping people get the help they need at the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command, and they all are found in the Customer Contact Office:

- Call Center;
- Inquiry Management (or Mail) Team; and
- Special Inquiries Branch.

But it isn't always easy to get them that help.

"Going in, there's a recognition that you could never provide the customers with all the services they want with the resources you have so what's the most efficient way of doing that?" said Gina Raymond, chief of the Customer Contact Office. "Part of determining how to provide services is how you implement information technology to do that so it becomes a high-tech business."

AR-PERSCOM is looking into Interactive Voice Response, or IVR, similar to systems used by financial institutions through which a customer can gain access to his account information. The Internet may also play a greater role in serving the customer. (You can find the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command's web site at www.army.mil/usar/ar-perscom/arpercom.htm)

There are different avenues for providing the services the customers are seeking, different ways to process their requests, Raymond said. What they all have in common is technology.

"The technology for doing this needs to be integrated — phones, mail, Internet, e-mail, fax — so it doesn't matter what the

medium, we are the integrator for all those things."

In addition to acting as the integrator, CCO provides the following services:

- Analyze, track, control and measure processing for routine mail inquiries, including hard copy, fax, Internet and electronic mail;
- Screen, redirect, answer or transfer telephone inquiries received in the Call Center;
- Facilitate or provide services for walk-in customers;
- Analyze, track, control and measure processing of high-level inquiries, including:
 - White House;
 - Congressional;
 - Office of the Chief, Army Reserve, or OCAR;
 - Freedom of Information/Privacy Act inquiries;
 - Legal requests, including subpoenas and court orders; and
 - Other VIP inquiries.

"A good part of what we do is deflect and redirect misdirected inquiries," Raymond said. "We never just say, 'You've called the wrong place.' We turn it around; we say, 'This is where you need to go for that information.' We have knowledge of the National Guard, active Army, VA, NARA (National Archives and Records Administration), DFAS. Those are our partner agencies."

Helping customers get help at agencies like the Veterans Administration and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service is one less thing for personnel managers to have to do.

"Anything we can handle in CCO is something that doesn't have to be handled by the core service providers," Raymond said. Good examples are

- analyzing mail requests to make sure they go to the proper office;
- updating phone numbers and addresses as a matter of course; and
- giving status reports on requests through the Soldier Management System. SMS is a computer application that helps AR-PERSCOM users navigate complex databases, such as the Reserve Database Management System, or RDMS, and Total Army Personnel Database-Reserve, or TAPDB-R.

"It's important for the internal customer (AR-PERSCOM personnel management directorates) to understand this because directors always need to be thinking, 'What part can CCO play and how can CCO assist?'" Raymond said.

Raymond explained that every directorate knows its business from top to bottom. CCO has to know the top layer of every directorate's business so its contact representatives can solve as many problems as possible before having to send the customer to a subject-matter expert in one of the directorates.

For instance, 67 percent of telephone calls about Retired Pay (received July through November 1998) were handled in CCO's Call Center and did not need to be transferred to pay specialists.

CCO can be considered part of every directorate's staff, she said.

"We work the front-end piece of the service. If we didn't do it, they'd do it," she

Marilyn Caine of the Customer Contact Office assists Staff Sgt. Darryl Riley of the 301st Area Support Group in Fort Totten, N.Y. Riley traveled 17 hours straight to update his points and records at AR-PERSCOM.

said. "It's almost as if they contracted out that piece of their business."

Inquiry Management Team

The Mail Team, as CCO's Inquiry Management Team is often called, is more than a mail room whose task it is to sort mail by address. The Mail Team must read and evaluate every letter for AR-PERSCOM's Personnel Actions and Services Directorate, or PASD, to analyze the request and determine where it really belongs. (PASD requests comprise the largest portion of mail in the entire organization.) Eventually the Mail Team hopes to expand to other directorates.

To streamline the process, the Mail Team received scanners in early January so staffers can scan returned mail for bad addresses using the bar code, which prevents AR-PERSCOM from sending another piece of correspondence to the bad address.

Often the bad address is the one the customer uses for AR-PERSCOM. A customer may use an old address or office symbol, or an office symbol for a directorate that no longer exists. He may even address a letter to an office that has helped him in the past with a different type of request. The customer may even send it to AR-PERSCOM because he just doesn't know where to send it.

"About 20 percent of the mail doesn't even belong to AR-PERSCOM so we're

saving PASD the time it takes to open it and read it," said R. Scott Leonard, the chief of the Inquiry Management Team.

In addition to figuring out which office can help the customer most efficiently, Mail Team members enter the information into the Soldier Management System, or SMS, so that it can be tracked.

But they do more than snail mail.

"We're purchasing an e-mail management system," said Leonard, co-chairman of the Internet subcommittee. Web-based forms are the next step.

With the scanners, the Mail Team received an optical character reader, or OCR,



Karen Flinkstrom of CCO's Special Inquiries Branch takes a call. Her branch deals with congressionals, Freedom of Information Act inquiries and legal requests.



Photos by Andrea Wales
Jennifer R. Jones of the CCO Call Center helps a customer who called the AR-PERSCOM's toll-free number, 1 (800) 318-5298.

computer application. With the OCR, staffers will be able to scan in handwritten data from the ARPC Form 3725/IRR screening, verify that the OCR read it correctly, "then basically hit the Enter key and it'll go into a database," Leonard said, explaining that it eliminates the need for a person to have to type the information into the database.

Call Center

When the customer follows up on his request by telephoning the Call Center, a contact representative will be able to go into the SMS computer application and check on the status of the request: when it arrived, what office handled it and whether the problem has been resolved.

"(Our job) is ever-expanding: As we get more knowledge, we answer more questions," said Linda Torrudio, supervisory contact representative of the Call Center. "Our goal is twofold: to answer more calls than we are and to transfer fewer — to see it as far down the line as we can before we give it to a subject-matter expert."

The Call Center also covers the parlor where walk-in customers are greeted. If the request cannot be handled by CCO staffers, a subject-matter expert is called from one of the personnel directorates and they will meet in one of the parlor's counseling rooms. In the parlor is also an identification card station, to which another will be added, Torrudio said.

Special Inquiries Branch

Special Inquiries is responsible for VIP inquiries, including Freedom of Information Act, Privacy Act, congressionals, court orders and subpoenas [(314) 592-zero VIP].

"We try to work it at the earliest level if it's something in our bailiwick," said Kathy Caylor, head of the branch and chairwoman of the Soldier Management System subcommittee which suggests SMS curriculum development for the command. "My office is responsible for those things in addition to SMS. We're kind of SMS gurus."

SMS helps the entire organization because at a glance an AR-PERSCOM user can see the status of a request and help the customer quickly and easily.



Connie Key of the Customer Contact Office's Inquiry Management Team analyzes an incoming mail request to make sure it gets to the proper office.



THE GATEWAY

Information for the USAR Full-Time Support Community

A special pullout section of the Hub



Looking forward to retirement? Officers, have an eye for detail

by Jeffrey McNeill

AGR officers anticipating retirement with 20 years, or more, of active federal service, or AFS, should plan on following procedures to ensure a smooth transition.

The Full Time Support Management Directorate, or FTSMD, will notify you and your command approximately one year prior to your scheduled release from active duty, or REFRAD.

The notification packet will contain an acknowledgement to the original letter; a sample voluntary retirement request and a sample leave form (DA 31).

Within 90 days of receipt of your notification packet, you should determine your intentions concerning retirement and whether you wish to attend an Army Career and Alumni Program, or ACAP, briefing. To do this, complete the acknowledgement pages and return it promptly. The sample voluntary retirement request is taken from AR 600-8-24 and is, for the most part, self-explanatory.

The sample leave form is provided should you request transition leave and/or transition permissive temporary duty, or PTDY, if authorized, in conjunction with your retirement. You must provide FTSMD with a copy of your approved DA 31 (along with your voluntary retirement request).

Transition/retirement orders cannot be published until FTSMD officials know your approved dates of transition leave and/or transition PTDY.

Note: When you sign out of your unit and arrive at the transition point for out-processing, you must have approved leave form in your possession for all days (including weekends and holidays) between the date of transition and last day of active duty.

Requests for retirement may be submitted not earlier than 12 months before the retirement date or no later than four months before the requested retirement date or beginning date of transition leave, whichever is the earliest. If your request for retirement has not been received within 120 days of your REFRAD (even if you are awaiting approval on an AFS extension request) separation orders will be published transferring you to the Individual Ready Reserve.

Note: If you have submitted a request for an AFS extension, you must still submit your application for retirement. Retirement orders are much easier to revoke than they are to publish.

You can expect to receive your orders approximately six to eight weeks prior to the requested retirement date or beginning date of transition leave, whichever is earliest.

Caution, AGR soldiers completing extensions!

by Sgt. 1st Class Cheryl Rowland

When completing an extension of an enlistment/re-enlistment agreement, AGR soldiers attached to troop program units, or TPUs, must only check one block in section 1 of the DA Form 4836. The correct block for AGR soldiers is...

☒ USAR-ACTIVE GUARD RESERVE.

Many of the AGR extensions have two

blocks checked. You are attached for duty at a TPU, you are not an assigned unit member nor considered a TPU drilling reservist. Therefore, the only block that must be checked is the one that reflects your control group,

☒ USAR-ACTIVE GUARD RESERVE.

Checking both the TPU block and the AGR block could misroute your extension of enlistment/re-enlistment to the wrong

place. Additionally, it delays the sorting of your extension of enlistment/re-enlistment until the person sorting the mail finishes and takes the time to look up your Social Security number to find out the appropriate category.

The Full Time Support Management Directorate will publish your AGR active-duty orders to reflect an authorized extension of enlistment/re-enlistment agreement.

From the sergeant major



Welcome FTSMD's new directorate sergeant major

by Sgt. Maj. Michael Francisco

Boxes are packed, phone service is re-routed, and computer profiles are changed. With the jump from fiscal year 1999 to FY 2000, there was a change in mission focus and a new Full Time Support Management Directorate sergeant major.

Sgt. Maj. Michael Francisco transitions to Senior Enlisted Manager, Senior Officer and Enlisted Management Office, or SOEMO; and Sgt. Maj. Terry Marmaduke arrives as his "turtle" from the Reserve Affairs Office, J1, U.S. Central Command.

Mission focus changes from "accession" of new AGR soldiers to fill and maintenance of U.S. Army Recruiting Command, or USAREC, "foxhole recruiter" positions; achievement and maintenance of our new end strength objective of 12,804; and providing quantified, dramatic improvement to our customer service.

FY 99 at the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command was capped with a visit and congratulations from Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Plewes, the chief of the Army Reserve.

Meritorious performance of a difficult and challenging 1,000 plus-up mission was celebrated in an uproarious pep rally Oct. 1. The year was anything but usual. Thank you to everyone who participated in mission accomplishment. Your efforts, extreme focus and can-do attitude made us successful.

In the brief transition between fiscal years, we made time to review and update our standing operating procedures, or SOPs. Customer-service practices were reviewed and enhancements planned. Ongoing standardized training sessions reinforce our work-force knowledge and procedures. We implemented our FY 00 mission strategies.

Marmaduke brings with him a wealth of experience from extraordinary assignments. He will represent the interests of our enlisted Active Guard Reserve soldiers in the next century.

Francisco will provide continued quality personnel management in the spring 2000 move of senior enlisted management from St. Louis to Washington, D.C.

Mission focus changes from 'accession' of new AGR soldiers to

- **filling 'foxhole recruiter' positions;**
- **maintaining the end strength objective of 12,804;**
- and**
- **improving customer service.**

From the eagle's nest



Focus 2000 –

FTSMD enters the ‘new millennium’

by Col. Barry B. Gallagher

Happy New Fiscal Year! I would like to update everyone on the three primary targets that the great civilians and soldiers of the Full Time Support Management Directorate, or FTSMD, are focused on this year.

First, we must fill over 160 vacant recruiter positions in the U.S. Army Recruiting Command and maintain 100 percent recruiter strength for the rest of the year.

Second, we need to achieve our assigned end strength objective of 12,804 AGR soldiers and achieve greater balance in the placement of our soldiers by Sept. 30. Finally, we are committed to achieving dramatic improvements in customer service to our commanders and soldiers.

Our first challenge this year is to increase the number of Active Guard Reserve, or AGR, recruiters. The U.S. Army Recruiting Command has a vital role in maintaining the strength of USAR units. The current shortages of AGR recruiters throughout USAREC must be filled early in FY 2000 to give USAREC the best chance to achieve the USAR accession mission. We're currently working with USAREC and the regional support commands, or RSCs, to identify qualified individuals to bring into the AGR program for recruiting duty. We are also screening eligible AGR soldiers for three-year assignments as detailed recruiters. Our plans call for us to fill over 160 vacancies before the end of February 2000. When we achieve that goal we will strive to maintain AGR recruiter strength at 100 percent for the remainder of the fiscal year. We will need the complete cooperation of commanders and soldiers to accomplish this critical mission.

Our second challenge is to achieve our end strength objective of 12,804 AGR soldiers. Thanks to a lot of hard work and cooperation by the entire USAR community, we were able to exceed the same mission in FY 1999. We are currently at 12,858 soldiers. In addition, we have over 800 soldiers on our AGR Order

of Merit Lists who are eligible for entrance into the AGR program. We expect to replace about 1,000 soldiers who will retire or leave active duty this year.

We are not in the same position we were in last year when we were looking at accessing over 2,000 soldiers into the AGR program. Now that we are nearly full and have a large list of qualified replacements – we will focus on balance the strength levels in the RSCs and ensuring that we “balance the buckets” amongst the commands so that all commanders have their “fair share” of the AGR soldiers who are available. We will continue to use the tiered resourcing philosophy to determine the relative priority of fill as well as the relative strengths of units when we make personnel assignments.

Our third, and final, target for FY 2000 is improved customer service. We are aware that we don't always answer the telephone and respond to e-mail messages as quickly as people expect. We know that some basic types of personnel actions have been delayed in our organization for over 90 days. Our senior leaders are working with their staffs to identify our backlogs and develop strategies that will help us to be more responsive to the demands of our customers. We are looking at some of our key processes and developing measurements that will help us gauge and report our effectiveness. We will provide updates on our progress throughout the year in *The Gateway* insert of the *Hub* and on the FTSMD page of the AR-PERSCOM web site www.army.mil/usar/ar-perscom/arpercom.htm

The civilians and soldiers in FTSMD are working hard to achieve the objectives that make up our Focus 2000 program. We have many challenges as we approach the new fiscal year. The dedicated civilians and soldiers in FTSMD will find a way to turn these challenges into opportunities that will enhance the quality of AGR personnel management throughout the USAR. We are committed to hitting our targets in FY 2000 and making a positive difference for the commanders and soldiers we serve.

Re-enlistment process: Here's how to do it right!

by Sgt. Maj. Angel Heredia

A soldier is eligible to re-enlist when he is within 90 days of his expiration of term of service, or ETS.

Failing to re-enlist in a timely manner causes problems for the soldier and for the full time Support Management Directorate, or FTSMD.

The most significant of these is that the soldier may drop off the pay system. Separation action must be submitted on a soldier that does not have a reenlistment contract.

To allow sufficient time for the soldier to accomplish the actions required to transition out of the Army, the following steps are accomplished within the time frame indicated:

1) 13 months prior to ETS: A DLOS packet is mailed through the chain of command to the soldier.

2) Soldier responds by submitting a DA Form 4187 through his chain of command.

The DA Form 4187 indicates the following:

- Soldier is eligible to re-enlist in accordance with Army Regulation 140-111 table 2-1 and AR 135-118 table 2-4 and:

- Soldier is not under suspension of favorable personnel actions

- Soldier does not have a bar to re-enlistment

- Soldier is within height and weight standards of AR 600-9

- Date soldier passed the Army physical fitness test, or APFT (must be within nine months of the date of the DA Form 4187.)

- Date of soldier's last physical examination (must be less than five years from projected date of reenlistment)

- Date of soldier's last HIV test (must be within two years)

3) The request to re-enlist is forwarded through chain of command to Commander, AR-PERSCOM

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1 Reserve Way

St. Louis, Mo. 63132-5200

4) Soldier's re-enlistment eligibility is verified by his personnel manager in FTSMD.

5) A re-enlistment control number is issued 90 days prior to soldier's current ETS date.

6) Soldier re-enlists and submits the new re-enlistment contract to FTSMD at least 75 days prior to ETS.

7) The new contract is reviewed for correctness, if correct, soldier's files is updated to reflect the new ETS.

If a soldier has not indicated his intentions, the personnel manager will

contact him 90 days prior to ETS to ascertain what he plans to do.

If a re-enlistment contract is not received 75 days prior to ETS, the file is submitted to the Personnel Actions and Services Directorate, or PASD, for separation processing.

It is important that the soldier and the chain of command accomplish their parts of the process early enough to allow the Full Time Support Management Directorate time to complete the process.

Sgt. Maj. Angel Heredia is the Full Time Support Management Directorate's Enlisted Branch sergeant major.



The Gateway

A special pullout section
of the Hub

Winter 2000

Story coordinator

Master Sgt. Janet DeVos

Full Time Support

Management Directorate

AR-PERSCOM

This insert provides information of an advisory and informative nature concerning USAR full-time support and is distributed to all AGR and military technician personnel as well as to the employees of the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command, or AR-PERSCOM. This insert is governed by Army Regulation 25-30.

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Today's Mil Tech

Separation of non-dual status mil techs being implemented through FY00 NDAA

The U.S. Army Reserve Command Military Technician Division developed the Implementation Plan for the FY 2000 National Defense Authorization Act Mandatory Separation of Technicians and distributed it to USARC Major Subordinate Commands Oct. 28, 1999.

NDAA provides for the separation of non-dual status military technicians. For some, it provides for their reapplication and possible appointment to positions as dual-status military technicians. *(See page 18 to read excerpts from the USARC MT Division plan for yourself.)*

AR 140-315 exception exists for some MTs

Presently, AR 140-315/Employment and Utilization of U.S. Army Reserve Military Technicians, paragraph 8i, allows the Office of the Chief, Army Reserve, to except the removal of military technicians from the Selected Reserve, or SELRES.

These exceptions can be for

- maximum years of service (enlisted);
- mandatory removal date (all officers);
- removal for qualitative retention boards (enlisted and officers); and
- removal for some two-time officer non-selects for promotion.

The current exception policy allows them to be retained to the earlier of either age 60 or until eligibility for an immediate civil service retirement annuity is attained.

The U.S. Army Reserve Command has submitted a request to OCAR asking to change the way OCAR does these exceptions and allow all dual-status military technicians to remain in the SELRES until they

reach maximum age, regardless of annuity eligibility. This would allow officers and enlisted to stay to age 60 and warrant officers to age 62.

The USARC Mil Tech Branch has asked that this exception also be applied to all mil techs currently under an approved extension under the current criteria and to those MTs already separated from SELRES status [except those who received transition benefits (see below)] who have not reached their maximum age.

It is understood that all requests would be voluntary on the part of the military technicians, that MTs removed for cause or by reason of law are not eligible and that all military requirements must be met for continuing or regaining SELRES membership. This request has also asked that these soldiers be retained in a "promotable status."

Military technicians who desire to return to the SELRES, but who received transi-

tion benefits, must first submit a request through their military chain of command, documenting their "indispensability" in their proposed military position. The reference for "indispensability" is in AR 140-10/Assignments, Attachments, Details and Transfers, chapter 6, section II.

The Office of the Secretary of the Army will make the "indispensability" determination based on the supporting documentation.

The USARC will not normally support exceptions to remain in SELRES status for those officers who are two-time non-selects for promotion for failure to complete mandatory military education requirements. This is considered within the control of the military technician.

However, exceptions will be considered if the reason for any two-time non-selection that can be documented as "outside the control" of the MT.

NDAA questions on mil

Following are questions recently received from technicians in the field and answers from the USARC Military Technician Division

Q: I was hired into the military technician program prior to 1970 and I have no condition of employment. Public Law 106-65 doesn't apply to me, does it?

A: Yes, it does. Title 10, United States Code, Section 10217 defines what Congress considers a "non-dual status technician." In its definition it states, "For the purposes of this section and any other section of law, a non-dual status military technician is a civilian ... serving in a military technician position who (1) was hired as a military technician ... under ... (5) Any memorandum of agreement between the Department of Defense and the Office of Personnel Management ..." In the Fiscal Year 2000 National Defense Authorization Act language, Congress specifically addresses the conditions under which "non-dual status technicians" must be treated.

Any civilian employee in a military technician position who is not dual status — regardless of the reason — is affected by the NDAA language.

Q: I have heard that a current non-dual status, or NDS, technician has only one year from the date of the FY 2000 NDAA being signed to re-enter the Selected Reserve, or SELRES, or have their career stalled at their present grade/job. Is this true?

A: Yes. No current or future NDS who maintains technician status will be allowed to "apply for any voluntary personnel action." This includes promotion and reassignment. They are subject management directed reassignments, but these cannot involve a promotion. The date this provision takes effect is Oct. 5, 2000, one year from the signing of the FY 00 NDAA. This provision is apparently designed to encourage NDS mil techs to regain SELRES if qualified, or look outside the technician program for employment.

Q: How come prior to the law being signed we had absolutely no information from official channels concerning the NDAA? This information has become apparent and is vital to the lives of hundreds of employees and the MT Program.

A: The USARC first became aware of the mandatory removal provisions when the Joint Conference Report was issued in early August. Until that time, USARC had no idea that Congress was writing such provisions. USARC immediately informed all command executive officers of the provisions and began an evaluation of its impact.

An information paper was written Sept. 9, 1999, outlining the provisions of the Joint Conference Report. It was provided to all Command Executive Officers, the Partnership Council, the Military Technician Executive Council and Union Representatives. However, the Implementation Plan did not call for the "formal" notification of affected personnel until Nov. 29, 1999. This allowed for the identification and verification process to ensure only those truly affected would be notified.

Q: If it is not the technician's fault (maximum years of service, or MYOS) for not being dual status, will separations be evaluated on a case-by-case basis?

A: No. There is no such latitude. The law establishes the procedures for separation and retention, and USARC must comply. There are no waiver or appeal provisions.

Q: Will there be any buy-outs since NDSTs are being forced to leave the work force?

A: No. There are no provisions for the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority or Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay Authority for this Congressionally mandated removal. VERA/VSIP are normally offered to lessen the impact during a reduction in force, or RIF, which this is not.

Q: Will there be any sort of out-placement assistance, such as employment counseling and resume preparation?

A: Employment counseling is available from your local city, county and state employment offices. You can also contact your local military installation Army Career and Alumni Program, or ACAP, office for resume and career assistance.

Q: Do any reduction-in-force rules apply to the NDS technicians affected by the NDAA 00?

A: No. This is not a RIF.

Q: If a person is affected by mandatory removal, what effect does that have on applying for another civil-service position?

A: None. In fact, you are encouraged to do so.

Q: I'm 58 years old. Will I be able to draw on my TSP?

A: Yes, but there is a 10 percent penalty for withdrawal prior to age 59 and 1/2. Contact the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, or CPAC, retirement counselor or check the TSP web site at www.tsp.gov

Q: If someone received transition benefits after being removed from the Selected Reserve, can they return to Selected Reserve status, and do the transition benefits have to be paid back?

A: For all practical purposes, the answer is "no." However, those in the Retired Reserve with special separation pay or qualification for early retirement can be reassigned to the Selected Reserve if, and only if, they can prove "indispensability." That is, they have to prove — to the Office of the Secretary of the Army — that they are the only available soldiers to do those specific military jobs. This is virtually impossible, but you never know until you ask. Further, the conditions of AR 140-10, chapter 6, section II, must be met.

tech separation answered

Q: Can someone in the Retired Reserve return to the Selected Reserve?

A: Yes, as long as he is not over 60 years of age (62 years of age for warrant officers), and they can meet the requirements of AR 140-10, chapter 6, section II. This, of course, does not pertain to those with transition benefits as discussed earlier.

Q: Can a NDS person who has passed Mandatory Retirement Date come back into the Active Reserve? If so, what are the requirements? If not, why not?

A: OCAR has suspended MYOS for enlisted personnel until Dec. 31, 2001, so an exception is not necessary. Officer personnel must first request an exception for MRD. Then, assuming you haven't reached your eligibility date for an unreduced annuity, and are eligible and otherwise qualified, you should locate a TPU vacant position and submit a DA 4651-R through your military chain of command for assignment orders. See the MT Newsletter dated July 30, 1999, for packet contents.

Q: If an NDST person can find, apply for and be accepted in a Department of the Army, or DAC, position in the USARC when should the transfer take place? Will relocation expenses be paid? In what time frame must this be accomplished?

A: The approximate time frame between announcement and hire is normally around three months; however, depending on circumstances it can be shorter or longer. Permanent change of station, or PCS, expenses are normally paid but are subject to budget availability. The date of transfer must take place prior to reaching your date of separation. At your date of eligibility of an unreduced annuity, you must be removed from the program, by law.

Q: If I as an officer reached my MRD and retired two years ago and am not yet age 60, could I be returned to an active status as an officer so I could continue to serve in my mil tech position until age 60?

A: Presently, AR 140-10 and AR 140-315 only allow retention of military technician officers to the earlier of two dates, either the MRD or the date of eligibility for an unreduced annuity. However, this headquarters has submitted a request to OCAR to request extension of all dual-status military technicians (officer and enlisted) until age 60, or age 62 (warrants) without regard to the date of eligibility for an unreduced annuity.

Q: If a technician has not bought back his active-duty time does he have to?

A: No one has to buy back active duty time. Personnel under the Civil Service Retirement System, or CSRS, first employed before Oct. 1, 1982, may pay a deposit for military service performed after 1956, in order to avoid the reduction that would take effect at age 62, if eligibility for Social Security payments are received. If employed under CSRS on or after Oct. 1, 1982, or the Federal Employee Retirement System, or FERS, regardless of the date hired, you will receive credit at retirement, only if the deposit is made. (Details can be found on page 15 in the *Gateway* insert to the October/November 1999 *Hub* magazine, published by AR-PERSCOM.)

Q: When I reach 30 years of service I will not be 55 years old. Will I be forced to retire? Will I be penalized for each year under 55?

A: No, you will not be separated until attaining your date of eligibility for an unreduced annuity at age 55 and 30 years of service. Again, you are not "forced to retire." You may continue federal service in a non-MT position, if you choose.

Q: Should I plan to attend one of the pre-retirement seminars that are offered at Fort McCoy, Wis.? If so, how far out should I start to plan to attend?

A: Yes, you should definitely plan to attend a pre-retirement seminar. If you have been identified as a potential loss in FY

2000, you should plan on attending one of the seminars currently being conducted.

Q: What are advantages/disadvantages of retiring "under the gun" versus being "separated"? Seems like retiring would void any entitlement to unemployment.

A: You should contact your state unemployment office and ask what determines how unemployment benefits are paid.

Q: What about the Priority Placement Program and when can PPP be requested?

A: Presently, technicians are not eligible to participate in PPP based on this mandatory separation from the MT Program. However, the USARC is currently requesting an exception to the current Office of Personnel and Management manual to allow for voluntary registration for those who are immediately being impacted. No final decision has been made. A separate action is also being submitted to request a formal change to the manual to cover those who will be affected in the future.

Q: I want to take advantage of the Federal Employee Health Benefits when I retire. Right now, I understand you have to be enrolled in FEHB for at least five years before you can retire. If I am forced out in the next few years will this 5-year requirement be waived so I can enroll immediately? Will I get at least five years' notice of my retirement so I can enroll in FEHB?

A: No, you will not be notified when you are within five years of your date of eligibility for an unreduced annuity. Enrollment in FEHB is a personal decision. You must have been enrolled in FEHB for at least five years immediately prior to your retirement, though not necessarily in the same plan. The Office of Personnel Management has the authority to waive the five-year requirement, if OPM officials deem the conditions merit an exception. However, Public Law 86-382 says that a person's failure to meet the five-year requirement must be due to exceptional circumstances.

USARC releases plan to carry out MT separations

The U.S. Army Reserve Command Military Technician Division released an implementation plan in late October. Excerpts are below. Take special note of areas marked by squares:

The Fiscal Year 2000 National Defense Authorization Act changed the law mandating that non-dual status technicians, or NDSTs, who are eligible for an unreduced annuity must be separated from the technician program. These individuals fall into various categories depending upon the date they reach eligibility for the unreduced annuity, and the NDAA defines a specific separation date for each individual based upon certain factors.

Any NDST assigned against a technician position who meets the unreduced annuity provision, or other separation criteria of the law, is subject to mandatory separation under this law.

The CPAC, in coordination with the individual reserve command and the USARC Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, or DCSPER, will make final determination of whether a NDST is subject to mandatory separation requirements under this law.

The CPAC will review the database to identify a preliminary list of individual NDSTs who meet the separation criteria established by the change in the law. This list will be sent to each command for review. The preliminary list will also be provided to the USARC DCSPER. (Note: Commands not serviced by the Fort McCoy, Wis., CPAC will be worked in the same manner by their servicing CPAC.)

The CPOC will provide CPAC with the official personnel file for a thorough records review and verification that an individual technician is eligible for the unreduced annuity, or one of the other separation criteria. Commands will review each case and provide confirmation that the employee is currently assigned to a technician position, and not currently a member of the Selected Reserve, or SELRES.

In addition, the command will notify the employee that a preliminary determination has been made that he is eligible for an unreduced annuity, or one of the other separation criteria. The employee will provide any information that could affect this determination.

Disagreements will be resolved between the commands and CPAC. Once validated, the CPAC will send a roster of eligible NDSTs to the USARC DCSPER for formal notification.

The USARC DCSPER (Military Technician Division) will formally notify each command where NDSTs are found eligible for separation. In turn, each command will formally notify each NDST through command channels. Formal notification to the NDST will include a personal letter from the Chief, Army Reserve; an information paper, which lists their options and responsibilities; and a fact sheet with questions and answers. The information paper will include identification of each NDST's CPAC personnel specialist and the CPAC retirement counselors.

Although the technician may seek advice from multiple sources, the CPAC personnel specialist and the retirement counselors are the best sources of information. Each retirement is unique, based on an individual's personal situation and is best approached by one-on-one counseling with a retirement counselor. Additional sources of information may include internal command assets such as the CPO liaison personnel. Pre-retirement seminars will be conducted at multiple regional locations throughout the United States as well as at the Fort McCoy CPAC.

■ An NDST eligible for an unreduced annuity at the time the NDAA

was passed (Oct. 5, 1999) has three options available: seek another civil service position that does not require SELRES membership, request retirement or await separation.

(1) Seek another civil-service position. Affected employees may seek a job with any other federal agency through their usual hiring process. They may use the RESUMIX system, access opportunities through the Internet (www.cpol.army.mil) or directly contact other commands and agencies to find job opportunities.

(2) Retirement. Upon making the decision to retire, an NDST must pick a specific retirement date and submit a retirement application/packet to the CPAC. (Retirement packets must be received by Feb. 5.) Each command must submit a PERSACTION for the technician's retirement. CPAC retirement counselors are available to guide each person through this process and answer any questions the technician may have. There are a number of individual issues that will need to be worked through, such as health insurance, life insurance, buying back military time and so forth. Attendance at a pre-retirement seminar is highly recommended as an important way to develop solutions to their individual problems or issues. The CPAC will conduct regional seminars from November 1999 through January 2000, as needed. Once CPAC receives the retirement packet, CPAC will perform quality control checks and coordinate with the CPOC, and any other required organization, to ensure the NDST receives the full benefits to which he is entitled. If there are any outstanding personnel issues, the NDST should work through the CPAC counselors to resolve them.

(3) Separation. If the CPAC does not receive a retirement application from the NDST and a PERSACTION from the command by Feb. 10, each command will submit a PERSACTION requesting separation of the technician. (Eligible NDSTs who have not submitted retirement applications will be separated from the rolls April 5.) By Feb. 15, the CPAC will prepare an appropriate separation notice for the supervisor to issue to the employee. Throughout the entire separation process, the CPAC specialists and counselors will be available to guide the employee.

■ An NDST who becomes eligible for an unreduced annuity after Oct. 5, 1999, has a fourth option available — gain (or regain) dual status. Working through a personnel manager at their unit of employment or at AR-PERSCOM, an NDST may be assigned to a position in the SELRES, and thereby gain (or regain) dual status. Appropriate SELRES membership is assignment in a troop program unit, or TPU, or to an individual mobilization augmentee, or IMA, position. All other technician program assignment requirements, i.e., same unit and compatibility, will apply, as appropriate.

■ An NDST who was hired after Feb. 10, 1996, and who is not eligible for an unreduced annuity may either seek another civil service position, gain (or regain) dual status, or will be separated no later than one year after loss of dual status.

Each command will take full responsibility to ensure that retiring or separating technicians receive the full courtesy extended to any other separating employee who has given dedicated service to the nation. This will include the appropriate awards and decorations, and a retirement ceremony. Administrative outprocessing will be accomplished in sufficient time to ensure full operational continuity and no adverse impact on readiness.

Are you squared away?

Admin change in officer promotions could affect your Reserve career

by Maj. Joseph Whitlock

A recent administrative change in officer promotions will result in some officers being considered for promotion up to a year earlier than expected.

Earlier consideration is great – it means quicker advancement and a bigger paycheck.

However, it also means these officers will have about a year less to complete any professional military education, or PME, required for the next higher grade. This change may affect any first lieutenant or captain with a date of rank between May 17 and Aug. 31 in years 1996 or later. It may also affect any major with a DOR between Jan. 1 and Feb. 28 in years 1996 or later.

This administrative change will gradually expand the primary zone of consideration for these promotion boards over a three- to five-year period, starting with boards that convene in May 2001. The traditional date that a board convenes remains unchanged; only the primary zone of con-

sideration for these boards is expanding.

But shifting a zone by a few days will only affect a few officers, right? Guess again. Recent analysis conducted by AR-PERSCOM's Personnel Proponency Office found that this affects 766 of the 3,704 Army Promotion List, or APL, captains projected for promotion consideration in the first expansion year. That's a 20 percent increase in the primary zone for that board alone.

Expansion of zones of consideration is necessary so that all primary-zone officers selected for promotion are promoted no later than their maximum time in grade. Mandatory promotion boards convening since the implementation of the Reserve Officer Personnel Management Act, commonly called ROPMA, have been consistently missing this mark.

For all captain and major boards, this expansion allows for a minimum processing window of 150 days from the board recess date to the earliest maximum TIG of any officer in the primary zone of consideration. Similarly, it will provide 120 days

processing for all lieutenant colonel boards. This allows ample time to process these promotion recommendations before the maximum time in grade.

Take good care of your soldiers! The best thing you can do now is to identify those officers affected in your organization. Leaders need to mentor these officers, ensuring they have a viable plan to complete all required PME before their board convenes.

The timeline in this plan needs to consider the availability and duration of PME courses. This timeline may also require unit leaders to excuse an officer from annual training, in order to complete a PME course and be educationally qualified for promotion.

More information about zone expansion is coming soon to the U.S. Army Reserve web site at www.army.mil/usar. Go to the "Guidance" pull-down menu and look for an "Officer Promotion Zones" topic.

Maj. Joseph Whitlock works in the Personnel Proponency Office at the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command.

‘Don’t ask, don’t tell, don’t harass’: Army modifies previous policy on gays

by Linda D. Kozaryn and Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

Defense Secretary William S. Cohen recently expanded the description of the “don’t ask, don’t tell” homosexual policy to “don’t ask, don’t tell, don’t harass.”

Defense leaders are determined to make the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy on homosexuals in the military work. “I think it’s an overgeneralization to say it’s not working,” Cohen said during a recent trip to Italy and the Balkans. “What we need to do is make sure it’s successfully implemented.”

The recent Department of Defense actions are designed to stress the “don’t harass” portion of the policy. The actions, announced in August, tasked the services to incorporate in their training stronger language against harassment. “Harassment on the basis of sexual orientation is wrong, just as it’s wrong on the basis of race or religion or whether a person is male or female,” said Pentagon spokesman Ken Bacon during a news conference.

One DOD memo requires that DOD guidance on the homosexual policy be “effectively disseminated to all levels of command” and be made part of training programs for law-enforcement personnel, commanders and supervisors. The memo also requires the instruction be incorporated into recruit training and for service members to attend refresher training thereafter.

A second memo seeks to institute consistent and fair application of the policy. It recommends installation staff judge advocates consult with senior legal officers prior to the initiation of an investigation into alleged homosexual conduct.

The services are due to present their proposals to Rudy de Leon, defense undersecretary for personnel and readiness, Jan. 17. De Leon also asked the service leaders to issue strong statements that harassment of servicemembers for any reason, to include alleged or perceived homosexuality, will not be tolerated. Service leaders will direct commanders to take prompt, appropriate action against individuals involved in such harassment. These statements, too, are due Jan. 17.

“So once again, it’s an effort to emphasize that the policy should be described as ‘don’t ask, don’t tell, don’t harass,’ and to put some backbone in the ‘don’t harass’ part of the policy,” Bacon said.

The August directions grew out of a 1997 memo on the subject. Many people had complained that, if they come to commanders and say they’re being charged with being homosexual for whatever reason, then commanders have used this as “evidence” that they each were making a “statement” of their homosexuality.

“The 1997 memo says this is wrong,” Bacon said. “You cannot take a complaint from a soldier about harassment to be evidence of homosexuality. In fact, what the commander should do is investigate the harasser, the person who is harassing the soldier or making the complaint.”

The “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy grew out of recommendations DOD made in 1993. In 1993, Congress passed Title X Chapter 37 Section 654 – “Policy concerning homosexuality in the armed forces.” That law and sense of Congress is the basis for the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy.

The addition of “don’t harass” grew from years of military experience. “You treat all servicemembers with respect,” said a defense official. “Harassment, for whatever reason, is not conducive to good order and discipline.”

As a result of complaints of harassment and the murder of a soldier thought to be homosexual at Fort Campbell, Ky., Cohen ordered the DOD inspector general to assess the command climate of installations in regard to the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy. The IG will also judge the extent to which disparaging speech or expression with respect to sexual orientation occurs or is tolerated by individuals in the chain of command, defense officials said.

In fiscal 1998, the most recent statistics available, the services discharged 1,145 servicemembers under the policy. More than 85 percent of those discharged were “statement” cases, Defense Department officials said.

EO conference stresses Army's strength in diversity

More than 500 equal opportunity adviser NCOs, officers and civilian equal employment opportunity specialists honed their human relations' skills at the second annual Army Equal Opportunity Adviser Training Conference held last month in Orlando, Fla., according to an Army News Service release by Gerry Gilmore.

The Reserve Component's commitment to Equal Opportunity was evident by the large number of OCAR delegates and attendees from various reserve commands. AR-PERSCOM was well-represented by EO adviser Master Sgt. Patricia Lott and Chaplain (Col.) Stephen Leonard, according to AR-PERSCOM EO adviser Maj. Richard Cardenas.

The attendees, personally welcomed by Lt. Gen. David H. Ohle, the Army's deputy chief of staff for personnel, attended workshops on gender relations, motivational techniques, diversity management, listening skills and more.

"The conference was very informative and provided an opportunity for AC (Active Component), RC and civilians in the Equal Employment Opportunity and Equal Opportunity arenas to network, line up future speakers, obtain ideas and problem-solving skills for Army-specific needs," Cardenas said.

Army Equal Opportunity advisers promote equality of treatment and better communications and understanding between soldiers of different ethnicity and gender, said Col. John S. Westwood, the Army's director of human resources. Non-commissioned officers of all branches, he noted, can volunteer or be Department of the Army-selected at staff sergeant or sergeant first class ranks to serve two-year EOA tours, with the possibility of a one-year extension.

Westwood said Army EOAs and those from the other services are trained at the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute in Cocoa Beach, Fla., and at a recently opened second school in Little Rock,

Ark. Two years ago, he said, the Army increased the number of its military EOAs from 350 to 500, and assigned them at installation-, brigade-, division-, corps- and Army-level throughout the world.

Extremism was a special topic that was presented by a former racist "skinhead" at this year's conference.

Several guest speakers from the Pentagon — to include senior Department of Defense and Army Headquarters Staff officials — traveled to Orlando to praise the EOAs, emphasize the importance of their work and get feedback.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki told the attendees that equal opportunity "is essential to combat readiness." A twice-wounded Vietnam veteran of Japanese ancestry, Shinseki noted that building bridges of trust between soldiers of different backgrounds and gender is absolutely essential to the Army's mission.

"Equal opportunity means that all of our critical relationships — officer, enlisted, male, female, civilian, military families — are founded upon Army values ... solid foundations that raise our ability to trust in all of our institutions," he said. "Upon that trust we build cohesion and there is a direct link between the work that you do and our Army's ability to fight and win our nation's wars."

The 1996 Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., drill sergeant sex scandals proved to be a human relations "wake-up call" for the Army, Westwood said. Two years ago, he said, the Army increased the number of its equal opportunity advisers, enacted force-wide human relations training — such as the Consideration for Others program — and began holding annual Armywide EOA conferences.

"After Aberdeen, we had realized that ... [although] the Army was probably better, much better [at equal opportunity/human relations] than the civilian sector [overall] ... that wasn't good enough," Westwood said. "We had taken our eye off the ball.

"We wanted to re-energize our program, not just equal opportunity, but religion and gender, and all of the things that tie into the whole [human relations] picture. We wanted to do this through awareness," he said.

Claiborne Douglass Haughton Jr., the principal director and director for Civilian Equal Employment Opportunity, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Equal Opportunity), develops equal opportunity policies and programs that affect servicemembers and DOD civilians worldwide. An African-American born with cerebral palsy and blindness in one eye, Haughton urged the conference attendees to "turn disappointments into strengths by maintaining your optimism." Haughton spoke at AR-PERSCOM's 1998 Black History Month observance.

"I have to say to the Army that you must continue to work hard to make sure that the role of the equal opportunity adviser is not marginalized or undervalued," he said. "You have to make sure that the equal opportunity adviser is an integral part of the Total Army of the future."

Officials point to the recently released results of a DOD/congressionally mandated human relations survey — almost four years old — that was conducted throughout the armed services in 1996-97 which noted many minority servicemembers felt there is still some discrimination within the military.

"It is not that the findings surprised us; if you take the findings for what they were ... they're very accurate ... [but] after Aberdeen hit, we've just done so many things like values cards, adding a week to basic training to teach values, and Consideration of Others," Westwood said. "We have done incredible things [to improve Army human relations] ... That [survey] didn't take into consideration the thousands of hours we spent. We feel we're a lot better now than we were then, and that the next survey will show a dramatic improvement."



Timeline of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King's life

compiled by Joy Kauffman

The Dr. Martin Luther King holiday is celebrated Jan. 17 this year. The U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command held its program Jan. 10. Below is the chronology of King's civil rights activism.

May 1963: Hundreds are arrested in Birmingham as police use nightsticks, police dogs and fire hoses to assault children and adult marchers. The brutality shown on national TV newscasts horrified the nation. President John F. Kennedy sent in federal troops, and Birmingham's mayor repealed segregation ordinances.

Spring 1964: A campaign against segregation in St. Augustine, Fla., stalls; demonstrators are again viciously attacked, and civil rights activist Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is jailed.

July 2, 1964: President Lyndon Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act, banning discrimination in public accommodations and employment.

Dec. 10, 1964: King, 35, receives the Nobel Peace Prize.

March 7, 1965: King leads a march from Selma, Ala., to Montgomery, Ala., to dramatize the denial of voting rights to blacks. As demonstrators cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge, police — using bullwhips and tear gas — attack them.

Aug. 6, 1965: President Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act, guaranteeing the right to vote to all citizens.

June 1966: Activist James Meredith is shot during a one-man march from Memphis, Tenn., to Jackson, Miss. His march was intended to encourage blacks to register to vote. King and others

finish the march.

December 1967: King, by now having broadened his campaign to include all poor people, announces plans for a poor people's march to Washington, D.C., in April 1968.

Feb. 4, 1968: King speaks about the possibility of his own death. Of his funeral, he preaches, "What is it I would want said? Say I was a drum major for justice. Say that I was a drum major for peace. ..."

March 28, 1968: Having traveled to Memphis to assist striking sanitation workers, King leads a march through downtown Memphis that erupts in violence. He vows to return to lead a non-violent march.

April 3, 1968: King returns to Memphis. Addressing a rally, he utters the famous words, "I've been to the mountaintop." He goes on to say, "I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the Promised Land."

The words of his speech allude to the biblical passage Deuteronomy 32:48-34:8. In this Scripture, God tells Moses he will be allowed to go up on Mount Nebo and see the land the Lord had promised to the Israelites; however, because of his transgressions, he will not be allowed to set foot on it but will die on that mountain.

April 4, 1968: King spends the day at a Memphis motel, working through details of the upcoming march. That evening, he is shot in the neck and killed by a bullet from a high-powered rifle. He was 39.

King's Dream speech still touches America

"I have a dream." This famous quotation is from Martin Luther King's address at the March on Washington, D.C., for Jobs and Freedom. This excerpt offers a spiritual knowledge of the man for which this holiday is celebrated.

"Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning

of its creed — we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.

"This will be the day, this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning 'My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!'

"And when this happens, when we al-

low freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every tenement and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, 'Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.' " (J.K.)

Change in 'forgotten widows' law affects some Reserve surviving spouses

by Avis Allen

Survivor Benefits Program manager at Army Retirement Services

Surviving spouses of Reservists who were members before Oct. 1, 1978, and would have been eligible for retired pay at age 60, if they hadn't died before reaching that age, have been added to those eligible for Annuities for Certain Military Surviving Spouses, or ACMSS.

Section 644 of the FY 98 DOD Authorization Act created a benefit for what have been called "forgotten widows." "Forgotten widows" was the category of surviving spouses who were previously ineligible for a survivor annuity because their retirement-qualified spouses died before having the opportunity to enroll them in either the Survivor Benefit Plan, or SBP, created in 1972, or the Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan, or RC-SBP, created in 1978. Creating the ACMSS benefit remedied that situation for the most part. However, the military services went back to Congress to remedy one inequity.

Under the FY 98 DOD Authorization Act, the Reserve member's death had to have occurred between Sept. 21, 1972, and Oct. 1, 1978, thereby disqualifying surviving spouses of qualified reserve members who died before 1972.

Under the FY 2000 DOD Authorization Act, the criteria for ACMSS qualification now is that the deceased reserve member:

- must have completed at least 20 qualifying years of service toward retirement; and

SBP open season ends Feb. 29

Public Law 105-261 called for a Survivor Benefits Plan open enrollment period to be conducted through Feb. 29.

To find out more, open up a copy of *Army Echoes* magazine for retired soldiers, call your Retirement Services Office and visit the U.S. Army Retirement Services web site at <http://www.odcsper.army.mil/retire/retire1.asp>

- must have been married to the applicant on date of death; and
- must have died before Oct. 1, 1978.

Criteria for regular retirees' surviving spouses remains "must have died before March 21, 1974."

The Army has notified applicants disapproved under previous law of this change. They must reapply and provide supporting documents. Anyone who meets these new criteria is encouraged to apply. If the applicant is approved under this law, monthly annuities (\$174.76 beginning Dec. 1) are retroactive to Oct. 1.

Retirement services offices can be contacted for applications and assistance. RSOs are located at every major Army installation and are listed in *Army Echoes* magazine for retired soldiers and family members, and on the U.S. Army Retirement Services home page at <http://www.odcsper.army.mil/retire/retire1.asp>

The application indicates the documents that must be provided and where to send them.

Plewes visits AR-PERSCOM

The chief of the Army Reserve, Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Plewes, has taken a personal interest in the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command and its mission.

Visiting AR-PERSCOM about once a month since being named CAR last spring, Plewes has met with employees of all types through brown-bag luncheons and briefings. He has stressed the following priorities for AR-PERSCOM:

- Meeting end strength;
- Reducing the records backlog;
- Creating an Intensively Managed IRR; and
- Improving AGR management.

Plewes's visits are part of an effort to recognize the vital role AR-PERSCOM plays in the U.S. Army Reserve – and therefore in the Army itself.



Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Plewes



Photo by Andrea Wales

Here comes the bride!

Staff Sgt. Laura Santiago of the Enlisted Personnel Management Directorate and Staff Sgt. Tom Heaton of the 441st Chemical Detachment in Seattle, Wash., pass out wedding cake after a wedding ceremony Dec. 30 in Room 510, an AR-PERSCOM conference room decorated for the occasion. Chaplain (Col.) Stephen Leonard officiated.

Many changes on the horizon for

by Douglas J. Gillert
American Forces Press Service

The TSP open season ending Jan. 31 will be one of the last of its kind. More investment funds to choose from and daily transaction processing are among the major changes coming Oct. 1, 2000, to the federal employees' Thrift Savings Plan.

The delay from the previously announced May 1 implementation date of the new TSP record-keeping system was the result of

- the need for additional testing and
- the expected Oct. 1 effective date of H.R. 208, pending legislation that, if enacted, would permit the TSP to accept transfers from certain other retirement savings plans

and would eliminate the current six- to twelve-month eligibility waiting period.

The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board that manages the government's 401(k) for civilian employees will transfer all existing accounts to a new system in September. The system will convert dollar amounts to shares and offer investors two new investment options in addition to the three existing funds.

The new International Stock Index Investment I Fund will be invested in the Barclays Europe, Australasia and Far East stock index. The index consists of stocks of companies in 20 countries representing 45 percent of the value of the world stock markets.

The Small Capitalization Stock Index In-

ternational S Fund will be invested in a Wilshire 4500 index fund. The index represents approximately 23 percent of the market value of the U.S. stock market. It consists of stock actively traded in American stock markets except those in the Standard and Poor's 500 index.

The I Fund is expected to be the most volatile of TSP's five in the short run, followed by the S Fund. Third is the current C Fund, a Barclays Equity Index Fund that tracks the S&P 500. The C, I and S funds potentially can yield higher returns than the safer but generally lower yielding F bond fund and G government securities fund.

Currently, changes investors make to their accounts take effect the following month. Under the new system, transactions

Carlson bids 'bon voyage' to leisure-travel

Carlson Wagonlit Travel agents stopped providing leisure-travel services at stateside Army installations Jan. 10, according to an Army News Service release by Harriet E. Rice.

At presstime, Carlson Travel at the Federal Records Center in St. Louis was negotiating with AR-PERSCOM to continue to provide leisure-travel services.

Carlson officials told the Army in October that the company would stop paying commissions to installations, and if the Army did not accept charging soldiers a fee to make plane reservations, the company would curtail its service. Carlson said those changes were necessary since cuts in airline commissions reduced the company's profits. Army officials said the company was unwilling to compromise on fee rates during negotiations, which led to the cut-off for leisure travel services.

Realizing some soldiers would be inconvenienced, the Army asked Carlson to continue helping soldiers with plane reservations in emergency-leave situations, holiday Exodus from training centers and leave in conjunction with official travel. Except

for emergency leave, soldiers can expect to pay a transaction fee from \$8.50 to \$24 at on-post Carlson Wagonlit Travel offices.

Weighing heavily in the Army's decision were the state of the travel industry and the multitude of options available for soldiers to purchase tickets, officials said.

"The advent of e-commerce and e-ticketing is making the on-site travel agent a thing of the past," said Dan Yount, U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center Leisure Travel program manager. "Charging soldiers a fee for service is not right when the same service is available at no cost from the airlines or off the Internet."

"As travel agents continued to cut concession fees to installations, it became obvious that Morale, Welfare and Recreation needed to explore different avenues to provide leisure travel service to soldiers," said Jo Pendry, chief of Business Operations at CFSC.

"Our efforts are focused on developing agreements with travel companies to get the soldier the 'best deal.' We want military

Civilian tuition assistance at AR-PERSCOM:

The U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command, or AR-PERSCOM, can help civilian employees who are eager to learn more, earn more and make a difference in their organization. To achieve and accomplish is the educational way.

To aid its civilian employees in accomplishing their educational goals, the com-

mand expanded its tuition assistance policy. The policy now pays 80 percent of the tuition of any accredited four-year or graduate-level university/college (private or public) in the St. Louis metropolitan area. The employee is responsible for the remaining 20 percent of tuition cost plus books and other incidental fees.

AR-PERSCOM employees who attend community colleges in the metro area receive 100 percent tuition cost. The employee only pays for books and other incidental fees.

Ask yourself: What will you be doing in five years? Ten years? Civilians can look to the **expanded** tuition assistance to help

employee retirement savings plan

will be processed each business day, giving investors more flexibility in managing their accounts. They also won't have to wait for a semiannual open season to change the amount deducted from their pay for Thrift Savings Plan investment.

Instead, they will be able to allocate future contributions at any time using the ThriftLine [(504) 255-8777] or the World Wide Web (www.tsp.gov) or by submitting a Form TSP-50 directly to their Thrift Savings Plan record keeper.

Open seasons will still occur for new enrollments, but the dates will change. After Oct. 1, the new periods will be April 15 to June 30 and Sept. 30 to Dec. 31. Currently they are May 15 to July 31 and Nov. 15 to Jan. 31. Enrollees will receive quarterly

rather than biannual statements for the periods ending March 31, June 30, Sept. 30 and Dec. 31.

Loan and withdrawal transactions also will change. Quarterly statements will include loan balance information. Employees with unpaid loans will be able to reamortize them more than once and repay part of the loan ahead of schedule at any time, rather than just once and for the full amount.

Included among new withdrawal options: Employees can make a one-time partial withdrawal if they haven't taken an age-based, in-service withdrawal. They can use any combination of single payments, monthly payments or a life annuity to withdraw the total account balance.

All key transactions will be available on the Thrift Savings Plan web site. There, employees will be able to allocate future contributions, check a loan status, obtain a loan prepayment amount and begin or, where spousal approval isn't required, complete loan and withdrawal requests and reamortize loans.

More information about the changes was published in the November 1999 issue of *Highlights*, mailed to current Thrift Savings Plan account holders, and is also available on the Thrift Savings Plan home page at www.tsp.gov. A mailer with information on the new implementation date will be sent to account holders in January with further mailings about the implementation being sent as the Oct. 1 start date nears.

services at stateside Army installations

travelers to be educated consumers and make informed decisions about their travel arrangements, but we can also help by leveraging the soldiers' buying power," she said.

Pendry added the Army is currently in discussions with the other services, the airlines and Internet companies for other options to best serve soldiers and other service members.

A special Morale, Welfare and Recreation, or MWR, web site <http://www.offdutytravel.com> has been created to help travelers find the best fares.

SatoTravel, the agency holding travel contracts at three CONUS installations, also advised Army officials that they would no longer pay concession fees effective Nov. 1, 1999. Army officials did reach agreement with SatoTravel about continuing service.

"SATO showed a willingness to negotiate fees and a concern for the young soldiers," said Bill Bartelt, director of CFSC's Business Programs.

No transaction fees will be charged sergeants and below or any soldiers on emergency leave. All other military travelers will pay

a fee of \$6 and a rate of \$3 for each additional family member.

"SATO has also agreed to provide airline bookings via a web-site, www.SatoTravelVacations.com, which includes a self-book and e-ticket capability for airline reservations at 'no charge' to travelers," Bartelt said.

Bartelt said this kind of agreement is an example of the ways Army MWR plans to use technology and travel industry trends to provide service to soldiers without fees. SatoTravel is also poised to offer a full range of tour and cruise options, which can be booked by calling toll free, (877) 304-8454 for cruises and (800) 949-7286 for tours.

"This is just the first of several arrangements the Army plans to ensure the soldier can truly get the best deal," Bartelt said.

For more information, call Yount at (703) 681-5225 or e-mail yountd@hoffman-cfsc.army.mil

Harriet E. Rice is the public affairs officer of the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center.

Have you thought where you will be in 2010?

them achieve the answers, said Rose Spears, a skill development specialist at the Performance Improvement Center, or PIC. The expanded civilian tuition assistance policy allows the civilian employee freedom in selecting courses that meet their job and career requirements, and fit into their personal time schedule.

Tuition assistance pays for courses related to current or future AR-PERSCOM mission requirements.

Courses in the field of business administration, computer science, finance, accounting, mathematics, social science, human resource management, and supervision are a few of the courses that meet

the current requirements for tuition assistance.

To find out more about tuition assistance at AR-PERSCOM, contact the Performance Improvement Center at Ext. 0459. To learn more about tuition assistance in your local area, contact the nearest Army education center.

AR-PERSCOM people deliver holiday cheer to local veterans

'Ho! Ho! Ho!'



Sgt. 1st Class Arla Tweedy and Maj. Janette Brown-McCoy get acquainted with Santa – Maj. Kenneth Spielvogel of FTSMD – in preparation for a visit to the St. Louis Missouri Veterans Home Dec. 13.



AR-PERSCOM representatives sing Christmas carols in the day room of the Missouri Veterans Home Dec. 13.



AR-PERSCOM commander Col. Timothy W. Cannon, Sgt. Maj. John Stewart, Sgt. 1st Class Carla Bride and Capt. Paula Barfield spend some time with a patient at the John Cochrane VA Hospital Dec. 15.

In keeping with a holiday tradition, AR-PERSCOM soldiers and civilians visited veterans at three St. Louis area veterans' facilities last week.

AR-PERSCOM deputy commander Col. William B. Pittman and Santa Claus led 30 AR-PERSCOM soldiers and civilian employees in visiting 200 veterans at the north St. Louis Missouri Veterans home Dec. 13.

AR-PERSCOM commander Col. Timothy W. Cannon led a group to visit over 80 veterans at John Cochrane VA Hospital Dec. 15.

The directorate sergeants major led a group to visit 120 veterans at the southside St. Louis Jefferson Barracks VA Hospital Dec. 16.

"We were all able to spend a few minutes with each veteran and everyone was touched and rewarded by this experience," said Sgt. Maj. John Stewart, the group coordinator and sergeant major for the Plans Directorate, formerly known as the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, or DCSPLANS. "This is my second year coordinating these visits,

and the command wanted to visit every veterans facility in St Louis. This year we added the Missouri Veterans home as a third stop.

"We were able to leave a nice gift pack to the veterans with the generous assistance from the spouses organization and Spirit of St. Louis Non-commissioned Officer Association Chapter," Stewart said. "In addition, a local office supply store gave a generous discount."

Bertha Washington of the "Sounds of 100" led the singing of Christmas carols to fill the halls with the sounds of the season.

Stewart reported that, due to overwhelming volunteer support, each visit comprised an entirely different group of AR-PERSCOM volunteers.

Santa Claus – Maj. Kenneth Spielvogel of the Full Time Support Management Directorate – supported the effort for the second year running.

"To the veterans we visited, 'Happy New Year,' and thank you for what you have done for this nation. AR-PERSCOM cares," the sergeant major said. (J.D.S)



Capt. Linda Moore of Health Services Personnel Management Directorate talks with a patient at Cochrane VA Hospital Dec. 15.



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Frank Ulery
Soldiers and civilians assemble before heading out to Jefferson Barracks VA Hospital Dec. 16.

NEWS NOTES

EVENT

Black History Month program scheduled

The U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command will observe Black History Month with a program Feb. 7 from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Great Halls. The theme for the observance is "Heritage horizon: the African-American legacy and challenges of the 21st century."

Guest speaker will be Dr. Dan Henk, the chairman of the Department of Strategic Studies at the African Center for Strategic Studies in Arlington, Va. African artifacts will be displayed in the atrium during the month of February.

For more general information about the national observance, visit the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, or DEOMI, web site at www.pafb.af.mil/deomi/deomi.htm Select "EO/EEO Publications," then go to "Research Publications."

COURSES

They aren't what they used to be

There's a fast and easy way to apply for courses and take tests through the Army Correspondence Course Program, administered through the Army Institute for Professional Development at Fort Eustis, Va. Do it online at http://www.aimsrdl.atsc.army.mil/accp/accp_top.htm Books are still available by mail, but many are conveniently accessed through the web site.

DEPLOYMENT

Guide available online

The Patient Administration Systems and Biostatistics Activity at Fort Sam Houston recently developed a Patient Administration Deployment Guide to assist patient administration soldiers in preparing for deployment and for use as a reference during deployment. The guide is available on line at <http://pasba.amedd.army.mil/deployguide.html>

RECRUITING

Army changes approach

While the Army usually relied on career-military officers in their mid-30s with a rank of sergeant to sergeant first class to deal with potential recruits, the service is changing the way it performs the important task as it attempts to overcome declining enrollment.

Now, new and potential recruits will be more prone to deal with young soldiers who are corporals and whose average age is 21, as the Army looks to fight off the shortfall the military is facing, according to published reports cited in an FPMI Communications news release. The Army is hoping that younger recruiters can better relate to new recruits.

There are about 400 soldiers in the Corporal Recruiting Program, said Sgt. 1st Class Victor Rios of the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, or USAREC, in a *Hub* interview. These men and women, who go through the same training as other recruiters, must be single since it is a one-year unaccompanied tour and to avoid added stress.

"The whole idea is to have a young figure in the field to communicate with the younger generation," he said. "If the corporal is successful and if he want to, he can extend two more years to complete the (traditional) 36-month recruiter tour."

Last year, only 68,210 recruits signed up with the Army, more than 6,000 fewer than the recruiting goal of 74,500. (The Army Reserve was within target range of its end strength objective.)

NAME CHANGES

Directorates renamed

The AR-PERSCOM commander recently directed the name change of three organizations within this command as follows:

- Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans, to Plans Directorate, or PLANSD;
- Deputy Chief of Staff, Resource Management, to Resource Management Directorate, or RMD; and
- Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, Administration and Logistics, to Personnel, Administration and Logistics Directorate, or PALD.

This change became necessary after the commander directed the establishment of the director of staff position.

RMD has initiated a request to change the Table of Distribution and Allowances to reflect the above. In the interim, the new names will be used to refer to these organizations.

TROA

Scholarships offered

The Retired Officer's Association, commonly called TROA, will award 200 grants of \$1,000 each for the 2000-2001 school year. Applications must be sent over cyberspace – and verifying documentation sent by snail mail – by March 1.

An applicant must be the dependent child of an active-duty member or drilling Reserve/National Guard member, officer or enlisted, of the one of the seven uniformed services: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, United States Public Health Service or National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

An applicant must be a high-school senior or college student under the age of 24 working on his or her first undergraduate degree. Selections will be made solely on the basis of merit: scholarship, citizenship and leadership. An applicant's uniformed-service sponsor does not have to be a member of TROA.

Applications will only be taken *on line*. (There are no paper applications.) Go to TROA's web site: <http://www.troa.org>, then to "Member Benefits" and click on "Scholarships and Educational Aid." If a computer is not available at home, an applicant should go to the school counselor's office or public library. E-mail unanswered questions to grant200@troa.org

